

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 – 8: Cancelled

9. (Currently Amended) A safety belt retractor, comprising:

a belt shaft has a carrier for a belt strap to be wound thereon;

a blocking mechanism, for said belt shaft, that is actuatable in at least one of a vehicle and a belt strap sensitive manner, wherein said blocking mechanism comprises a ratchet wheel that is mounted on said belt shaft and is adapted to be deflected radially;

a force limiting device that becomes effective in the event of a blocking, wherein said force limiting device comprises a housing, an inner space of which is filled with a viscous medium;

a central shaft that is disposed on an end of said belt shaft and extends around said belt shaft, wherein upon an actuation of said force limiting device, said central shaft is adapted to be coupled with said belt shaft via said ratchet wheel, wherein said housing of said force limiting device is formed by an outer housing wall and said central shaft, wherein said central shaft is provided with a radially extending shoulder that forms an end wall of said housing, and wherein on said shoulder said central shaft is provided with at least one socket that extends in a peripheral direction and projects axially into said inner space of said housing that is filled with said viscous medium;

a cover that is secured to said housing across from said central shaft, wherein said cover is provided with at least one counter socket that is radially offset from, and has a corresponding shape to, said at least one socket, wherein said at least one socket is coupled to said belt shaft in the event of a blocking so that due to relative movement and cooperation between said at least one counter socket and said at least one socket, said medium is forced between ~~associated~~ surfaces thereof, wherein at least two sockets are provided that project axially into said inner space of said housing, and wherein said counter sockets engage between said sockets.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) A safety belt retractor according to claim 9 40, wherein said sockets are a component of a socket type piston that is disposed in said inner space of said housing and is positively connected with said central shaft.

12. (Currently Amended) A safety belt retractor according to claim 9 40, wherein said sockets extend over a partial periphery of said central shaft.

13. (Previously Presented) A safety belt retractor according to claim 12, wherein two oppositely disposed socket sections are provided.

14. (Previously Presented) A safety belt retractor according to claim 9, wherein said central shaft is supported against said outer housing wall of said housing of said force limiting device via a bearing ring that is interposed between said central shaft and said housing wall.

15. (Previously Presented) A safety belt retractor according to claim 9, wherein a bearing ring is disposed between said central shaft and said cover of said housing of said force limiting device, and wherein said cover extends around said central shaft.

16. (Previously Presented) A safety belt retractor according to claim 9, wherein said outer housing wall of said housing of said force limiting device has an end that extends around said cover and is provided with radially extending projections that, in the manner of a bayonet closure, engage in receiving means formed on a housing of said belt retractor.